

Digital Connection

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Reading CQ on Zinio

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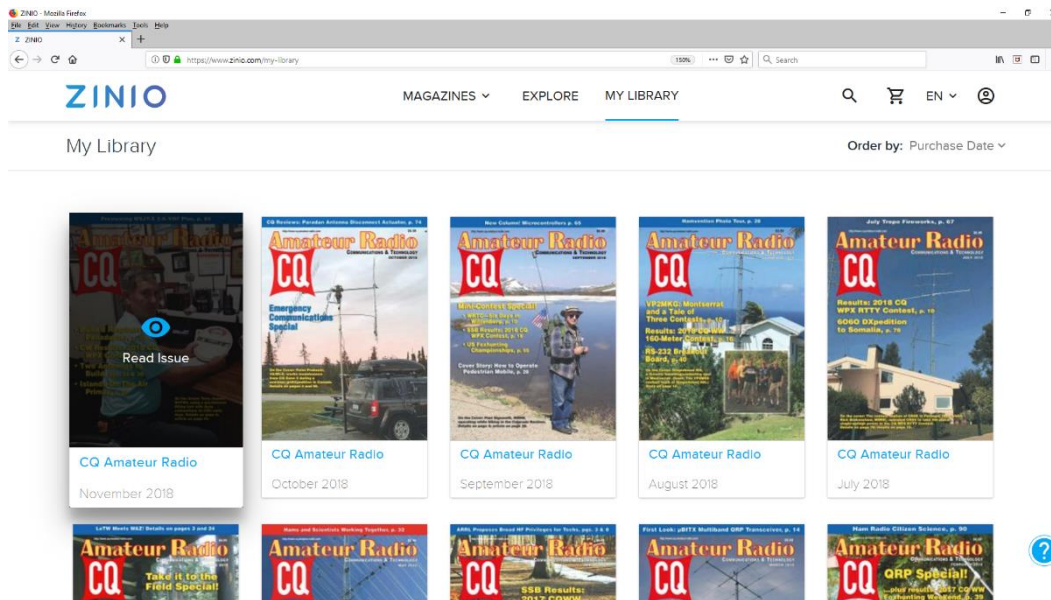


Figure 1: Here is a view of my 'My Library' on Zinio, as seen in Firefox on my Windows 10 desktop computer. All of my content is shown, and I can search for and subscribe to more than 6,000 other magazines. Note the Help icon at lower right, which offers detailed information for the various platforms supported by Zinio.

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This month we'll take a closer look at the Digital edition of CQ Magazine, hosted by Zinio. Although I wrote about this in the December 2011 edition, listening to subscribers at Hamvention gave me the idea that enough time had passed to revisit the topic. We'll take a look at the online edition, its advantages and disadvantages, and some of the features of the Zinio reader.

I'm getting to be an old guy, and with that advancing age come little quirks of personality that are more gracefully tolerated by others. One of mine is the preference to read things on paper: I subscribe to two newspapers, delivered to my driveway around 5:15 am every day, and almost a dozen magazines. As you can imagine, the recycling bin at the Rotolo residence is always full.

But the reality is that only a couple of those magazines actually show up on paper: the rest are digital subscriptions that I read on my iPad. There are several advantages, not the least of

which are the improved logistics of reading when I am traveling, not having to keep back-issues in the cellar in case I need to revisit an old article, and I can zoom in when I want to see something a bit larger than usual – my eyesight ain't what it used to be. Of course, letting a paper magazine slip through your fingers on to the floor by accident doesn't carry much of a penalty as with a wireless tablet.

Over 8 years ago, starting with the November 2011 edition, CQ Magazine has decided to partner with Zinio <<https://www.zinio.com/>> to deliver the monthly digital edition. Last Spring at Hamvention I had the opportunity to speak with hundreds of subscribers, and I promised several of them I'd write a column on the digital edition. I'm going to chiefly describe the features of the online edition as seen using the Firefox browser on a Windows 10 computer, but will also touch on a few other platforms and their differences.

Zinio hosts over 6000 different magazines, serving nearly the entire world in more than 30 languages. Their reader supports virtually every

major device and browser by leveraging XML (eXtensible Markup Language) compatibility.

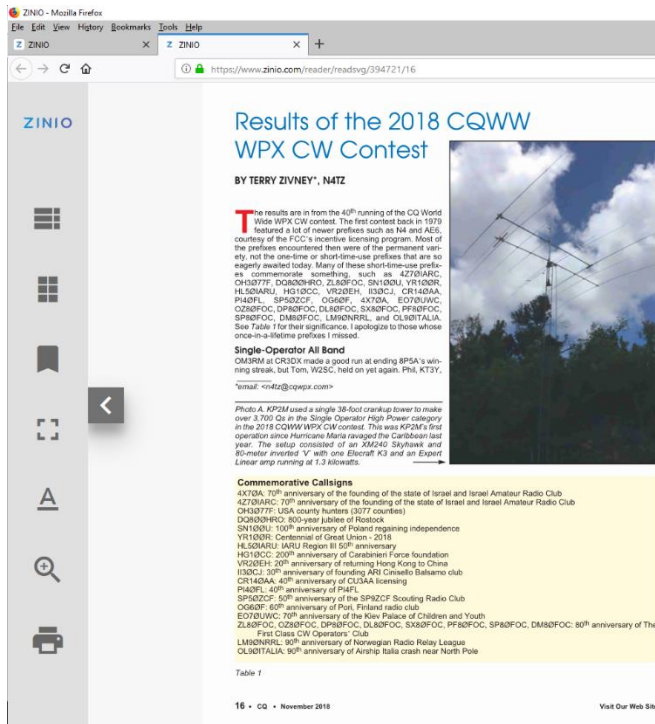


Figure 2: Two pages from the November 2018 issue of CQ in “PDF Mode” on the Zinio website. The display is identical to the print version. Compare this to Figure 3. Also note the various controls sprinkled around the edges, including (on the left side) the Table of Contents, navigation thumbnails, bookmarks, full-screen mode, Text mode, Zoom control and the Print button.

Once in the Zinio Content Management System (CMS), the pages are seamlessly distributed in several online formats, depending on the device.

Although you might also prefer the print edition, there are a few advantages to the digital edition. The first one is timing: the digital edition arrives, like clockwork, on the 1st of the month. Indeed, I’d have missed the Stone Mountain (GA) hamfest on November 3 and 4 if I hadn’t read the November edition the day it arrived – digitally.

You can read the digital edition in the *PDF view*, which looks exactly like the print edition’s layout, or for easier reading (particularly on small-screen devices like a phone) you can switch to the *Text view*. Both deliver the same content, of course, but the text view offers a ‘large print’ view and scrolls through articles more smoothly. The text view also supports white text on a dark background, easier on the eyes in a dark airplane for example.

The PDF view can be printed, onto paper and to a PDF file if your computer is equipped with a PDF print driver (there are several available,

some are freeware). Of course, CQ Amateur Radio is protected by Copyright, so please avoid



posting articles without permission. In many cases, permission isn’t difficult to get: just ask. We’re hams too, but our kids also like to eat (every day, those ingrates!).

That’s one of the double-edged swords of the online world: While you want to make it as easy as possible for subscribers to access the content, you have to balance that against protecting the Intellectual Property. I figure most hams are not out to steal from anyone, and so we’ll just trust that you won’t.

The Text version is nice to read, not just for the cleaner and larger font, but also because it is delivered as a scrolling page, without any breaks – almost like not having to turn any pages. Since the images are included, you won’t miss anything... except the advertisements. (I don’t know about you, but I actually *like* the ads, and always mention that I saw it in CQ when I buy something).

The PDF view can be zoomed from 100% and 500%, including the images. All of the CQ writers deliver, when possible, images at very high resolution, which means a 5x zoomed image is still fairly clear while really showing the details. You can zoom in or out using the scroll wheel on your mouse, and navigate by dragging the page with the mouse pointer. To switch between PDF and Text view, navigate to a page with at least one article on it (that is, one without just images or advertisements) and click the A icon on the left menu.

Figure 3: The same page as in Figure 2, but here in Text mode. You can see at top the 'dark/light' and text size controls, and note the navigation at the bottom. Text mode can be easier to read, yet it still includes all the images, which can also be viewed independently by clicking the Camera icon top left. You can also zoom using the browser.

Other navigation is also convenient: Web addresses (URLs) in the text are clickable. You can go to the Table of Contents with a single click, skip to any page with another click, and bookmark any page. Bookmarks are particularly handy if you need to leave a page for some reason, allowing you to pick up exactly where you left off – just like a physical bookmark in the print edition.

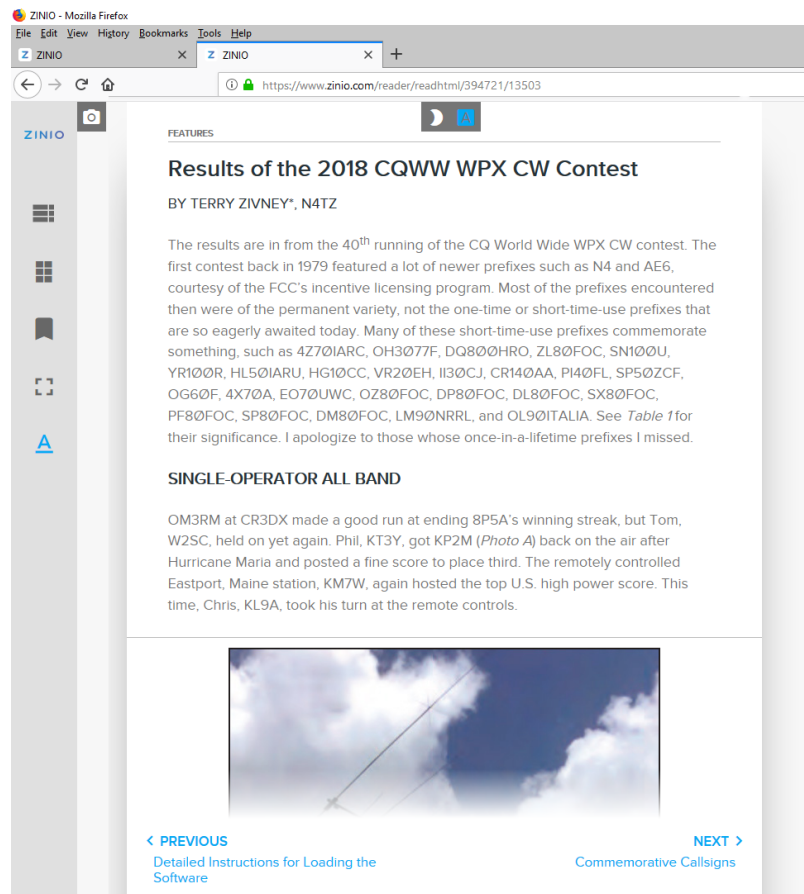
Going from page to page on the computer is as easy as clicking button on the side margin. On my iPad, I only have to swipe to the right or left to change pages. In the text view, there are links to the 'previous' and 'next' article at the bottom. In both views, there's also a "skip to page" icon that opens a thumbnail view of nearby pages. Although this opens a view with just a few pages, it can be expanded to almost the full screen. You can also scroll this view quickly to move through a lot of pages fast.

On smaller devices like a phone, there is also a full-screen view option to help with readability.

If there's a feature you're not quite sure how to use, or if you are wondering how the system might work on a different device or platform, the ? icon at the bottom right brings you to a help page, with details for Web, Mobile and Android.

Every issue from when your digital subscription started remains available in your archive. There is no need to download the content unless you want to read it. I generally keep only the latest month's magazine on the device, so I can read it without needing to connect to WiFi or the cellular network, but you can keep as much as you want – limited only by the device's memory – for instant access. This is also valid for the Web version: All content can also be stored offline if desired.

Managing your Zinio account is as easy as you'd expect. I decided to create an account directly with Zinio, instead of using my Facebook



credentials to log in, simply because I am not a Facebook user. I used to have a Facebook account, several years ago, but became concerned with privacy long before the recent issues in the news, and decided to delete it. It wasn't easy, but I eventually managed to make it all go away. Whichever way you decide to go, please promise me you'll set and use a good secure password, OK? If you need help with that, see my previous columns on that topic.

Subscribing directly with CQ, or using Zinio's subscription system, ends the same: You pay, and get access to the content. Remember, there are over 6000 magazines available on Zinio, so feel free to add to your library. In general, individual issues of most magazines, including CQ, are also available for a few dollars. You can save a few dollars by subscribing through one of CQ's special deals, for example at Hamvention – we offer these because we just love to talk to readers, so stop by and ragchew in person.

Speaking of subscriptions, aside from the timing, a digital subscription is a real advantage for foreign subscribers: With the cost of postage making it impossible to ship CQ outside the USA, a digital subscription is not only an excellent option, it is considerable less expensive than having someone mail the book to you each

Page 4

On the iPad and iPhone, the app is a bit more swipe-heavy instead of tapping on icons, but this suits the mouse-less environment just fine. I have an older 3rd generation iPad, no longer supported but working just fine, with one of the first high-resolution Retina displays. The biggest difference is the thumbnail image display, which appears along the bottom instead of as a fly-out window from the left. Another feature in the Zinio App for iPad is the text-to-speech feature, accessed after switching to text mode and started by tapping the Format (A) button and selecting it. I didn't see this option on my iPhone 7 though. On both devices, the controls are essentially the same.

The bottom line is that Zinio makes the reading experience about as good as it can be. While you do need an electronic device, which is not as reliable as good ol' paper, it is actually a very intuitive and easy process. When you download the app, the experience does not change much, aside from a few handy navigational features.

I hope you enjoyed this month's column, and thank you to all the folks who wrote about my column on Oscilloscopes. I'm not exactly sure what I'll cook up for March, I guess we'll have to see. Now that it's January, I again offer my best wishes for a happy, healthy and peaceful New Year to everyone on this good Earth.

73 de N2IRZ

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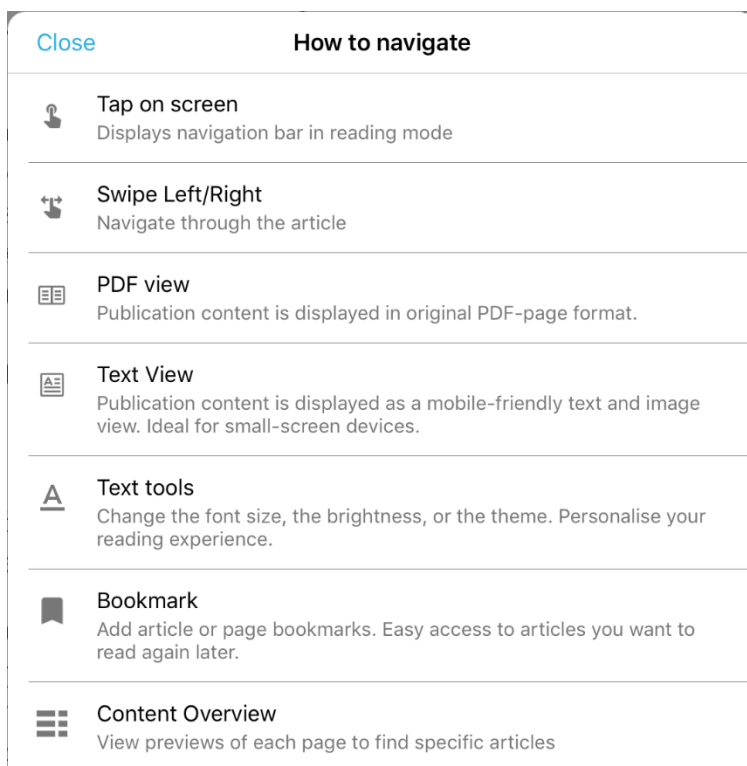


Figure 6: Here is a screen shot of the navigation instructions for iPad and iPhone, viewed by tapping the "i" information icon at top right. The tap and swipe are the biggest differences between navigating the Zinio App and the browser version.